

Amended claims - PCT / US98/14091

- Sub 1
1. Absorbent article comprising
an absorbent core defining a core region comprising a core backsheet material;
a chassis region surrounding said core region comprising a chassis backsheet material;
whereby at least the core backsheet material comprises a laminate;
said laminate comprising a vapour or gas permeable film or film like material, and further comprising a fibrous layer *positioned towards the outer side of the article during its intended use*,
characterised in that
at least one polymeric film layer is a unitary layer extending both into the core backsheet material and the chassis backsheet material,
and whereby the core backsheet material and the chassis backsheet material which comprises said unitary layer exhibit different degrees of breathability such that MVTR values of the core backsheet material is lower than of the chassis backsheet material,
and wherein said polymeric film layer comprises a polymeric matrix and particulate filler material embedded in said matrix.
- Sub B
2. An absorbent article according to claim 1, wherein the polymeric film layer is wider than fibrous layer.
- Sub C1
3. Absorbent article according to claim 1 or 2
further characterised in that
in the core region the MVTR is at least 500 g/24hr/m².
4. Absorbent article according to claim 3
further characterised in that
in the core region the MVTR is at least 1500 g/24hr/m².

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5. Absorbent article according to claim ¹ or 4 further characterised in that the MVTR values of the backsheet of the chassis region surrounding the core region are at least 20% higher than the MVTR values of the backsheet of the core region.
6. Absorbent article according to claim ¹ or 4 further characterised in that the MVTR values of the backsheet of the chassis region surrounding the core region are at least 500 g/24hr/m² higher than the MVTR values of the backsheet of the core region.
7. An absorbent article according to claim 4, whereby the filler material is calcium carbonate.
8. An absorbent article according to ^{claim 1} ~~any of the preceding claims~~, whereby said polymeric layer in the chassis region has a basis weight of less than 50 gsm.
9. An absorbent article according to ^{claim 1} ~~any of the preceding claims~~, whereby said laminate layer in the region has a basis weight of less than 70 gsm.
10. An absorbent article according to ^{claim 1} ~~any of the preceding claims~~, whereby said fibrous layer is a non-woven web.
11. An absorbent article according to ^{claim 1} ~~any of the preceding claims~~, whereby the polymeric layer and the fibrous layer are combined by heat or melt bonding.
12. An absorbent article according to ^{claim 1} ~~any of the preceding claims~~, whereby the polymeric layer and the fibrous layer are combined by extrusion coating.
13. An absorbent article according to ^{claim 1} ~~any of the preceding claims~~, whereby the polymeric layer and the fibrous layer are combined by adhesive.
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14. Absorbent article according to ^{claim 1} ~~any of the preceding claims~~,
whereby the article is a baby diaper or an adult incontinence article.
15. A process for inducing zoned vapour or gas permeability into a laminate for
being used in a product according to ^{claim 1} ~~any of the preceding claims~~,
comprising the steps of
- providing a polymeric film comprising particulate filler embedded in the polymeric matrix;
 - providing a fibrous web which has equal width or is narrower than the film in cross-machine direction;
 - combining the film and the web to form a laminate;
 - stretching the laminated and the non-laminated film zones by feeding the film and laminate zones between a pair of opposed pressure applicators comprising three-dimensional surfaces which are complementary to one another; and
 - subjecting the portions of said web located between said opposed pressure applicators to incremental cross dimensional elongation by causing said opposed three-dimensional surfaces of said pressure applicators mesh with one another,
- whereby said laminated and non-laminated film zones are at least partially permanently deformed and different vapour gas permeability is induced in various zones thereof.
16. A process ~~according to claim 15~~ whereby the fibrous web is narrower than the polymeric film in CD direction.
17. A process according to claim 15 or 16, further comprising the step of heat treating the web after having subjected the web to said incremental CD elongation step.

ET 18. A process according to any of claims ¹⁷~~15 to 17~~, whereby the intermeshing between the two pressure applicator rolls is essentially constant throughout the width of the laminated and non-laminated zones.

NE 19. A process according to claim 15, whereby the intermeshing between the two pressure applicators is different throughout various zones.

20. A material for use as a backsheet material in absorbent articles made by process according to any of claims 15 to 19, characterised in that at least one unitary polymeric film layer is covered by at least one fibrous layer, whereby the backsheet material has zones with different gas or moisture permeability across the unitary polymeric film layer.

AMENDED SHEET